

It is why the American Prosperity Agenda calls for a new approach of making smart investments in that basic infrastructure.

I actually wanted to speak to one more issue that is part of the American Prosperity Agenda. That is a focus on small-business ownership, and there are a number of pieces as part of that.

Congresswoman DELBENE, also of my State, has a bill that is focused on women's small-business ownership. Congressman HIMES of Connecticut is focused on issues around cybersecurity.

I have been working on legislation, along with Congressman HANNA of New York, focused on providing resources to small businesses that are working to combat cyber attack.

The reality is we know that small businesses are a key part of our economic future. You often hear that small businesses are the backbone of our economy. I like that saying. I think that is a good saying.

I always say that small businesses are our star running backs. They are Marshawn Lynch. They are who we should have handed the ball off to at the end of the Super Bowl a couple years ago.

I say that because, if you look at how the United States has generally made it out of recessions, it is not our largest employers that are the ones who are pulling us out of recessions. It is our small businesses that are racking up the tough yards and scoring the touchdowns.

I think one of the fundamental roles of the Federal Government, at the very least, is to get out of the way of our star running back, but, ideally, to do some blocking for them and to call some plays for them and enable them to score some touchdowns.

So a lot of the focus of the American Prosperity Agenda is to make it easier for entrepreneurs to succeed, whether that be to raise capital or to start a business or to combat hurdles that might present barriers to their business's success, like potential cyber attacks.

That is an important part of this agenda, and I think it is important to speak to that. Because, again, as we look at how to grow this economy, I think the small businesses of our country that already exist and those that are yet to be created are going to be an important part of that solution.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, we have heard an introduction as to how New Democrats are working to expand entrepreneurship, increase exports, invest in research and infrastructure, and set up Americans for success in the new economy.

Our economy isn't going to stop changing, and neither should our efforts to find the most innovative, effective solutions for adapting to those changes.

The Harvard Business School's United States Competitive Project has outlined eight actions it recommends that Congress take to make America

the most economically competitive place in the world to do business, not just to raise corporate profits, but to increase wages for working people across America.

Those include New Democrat priorities like tax reform, responsible Federal budgeting, simplifying Federal regulation, investing in infrastructure and research, and fixing our broken immigration system.

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I want to thank all the members of the New Democrat Coalition for their proposals and progress to increase prosperity and help hardworking Americans thrive in the changing global economy with more jobs, more skills, and more wealth.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 636. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

THE WRETCHED STATE OF RACIAL RELATIONS IN AMERICA TODAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to discuss something that may not otherwise be discussed this year in this Congress: the wretched state of racial relations in America today.

We passed a bill here about a month ago in the House of Representatives to eliminate the term "Oriental" from the law books. I submit that eliminating a term does not eliminate the racism that embodies that term, and I think it is about time that we recognize what this problem is, the fact that it still festers in America, and give some thought to what we can do about it.

I want to begin by relating two stories, both from my home State of Florida. The first one involves a 16-year-old girl. She was White. She had an encounter with police officers who were also White. She lived on the Atlantic Coast, which is largely White, and I heard about this from a friend of a friend.

What happened to her is that her parents got a call from the police officers late one night. They didn't tell her why they were calling, but they said: You have to come to this location. We need to talk to you about your daughter. She is here with us.

The mother went to that location, spoke to the White police officers.

They informed her that her daughter had been drinking in a car with her boyfriend, and they needed to take her home. She was shaken up a bit, so was the daughter, but everybody ended that night alive.

Now I want to tell you a different story. It didn't end so nicely. This was on the Gulf Coast, the coast of Florida that is heavily African American; and on the Gulf Coast one night there was a theme park, you could call it a fairgrounds, that was open to all students without having to pay. They could go on the rides, enjoy themselves one day each year. This is done in Tampa.

Now, teenagers being teenagers, some of them got a little bit out of hand. Many African Americans frequent that area, and they were out in force that night at the fairgrounds. There was a great deal of friction that night between the White police force and the African American teenagers who were there that night.

Some of them actually started running around, might have bumped into a few other people as they were running around. Someone started to scream. You will notice that apart from that physical contact, nothing I described is actually against the law, like, for instance, drinking in a car with your boyfriend when you are 16 years old.

A number of them, about a hundred African American youths, were arrested that night 2 years ago in Tampa. The White police officers insisted that they strip to the waist. That apparently was for the purpose, in the minds of the police officers, to see whether they had gang colors on their bodies—at least, that is what they said.

Now, one of them, Andrew Joseph III, actually hadn't done any of that running around, any of that screaming, any of that casual bumping. He hadn't done any of that, but he saw his classmates being arrested. He came to see what was going on. He saw that one of them had his hat fall off his head. He went over and he picked it up. The officer said: I didn't say you could do that.

They arrested him for picking up his friend's hat. They took Andrew Joseph, a 14-year-old boy, 2 miles away from the fairgrounds, and they pushed him out of the police car and said: You are on your own.

A 14-year-old boy who has parents who were reachable by a telephone, they pushed him out in a neighborhood he had never seen before, never been to before, had no idea where he was. He remembered that his father was going to pick him up at the fairgrounds. He felt pretty shaken up because he had just been arrested and was told to strip to the waist and, frankly, felt humiliated.

He found his way, as best he could, back to the fairgrounds 2 miles away. He didn't call his parents because, frankly, he was scared, embarrassed, didn't want them to know. He almost got as far as the fairgrounds. He tried to cross the interstate highway to get to the fairgrounds. In the midst of traffic in both directions, he was struck by